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ABSTRACT

The concept of bibliotherapy is not a new one. Aristotle believed that literature had healing effects and the ancient Romans also recognized that there was some relationship between medicine and reading. Most of the better mental hospitals in Europe had established libraries by the eighteenth century--in the United States by the middle of the nineteenth century. By the early nineteenth century, many physicians had begun to recommend books for the emotional difficulties of the mentally ill. Important people such as Drs. William and Karl Menninger furthered the use of bibliotherapy by encouraging the growth of the library at Menninger Clinic. In the field of education, teachers began to utilize bibliotherapy in the 1940s. Today, school media specialists, counselors, librarians, or teachers may incorporate bibliotherapy into their programs. During the 1950s, group reading was added to the treatment of alcoholism. Work in bibliotherapy progressed through the 1960s in such areas as drug addiction, fear, attitudinal changes, moral maturity, death and all exceptionalities. It also advanced in both educational and psychological areas. In the 1970s one of the first classes on the theory of bibliotherapy was taught. If bibliotherapists of the future will practice the profession of librarianship, make careful and detailed studies of their readers, and make use of their imagination and sense of humor, bibliotherapy will continue to prosper. (HOD)

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Bibliotherapy: An Historical Overview

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In recent years many people have expressed much interest in therapeutic reading -- bibliotherapy. What is it? Bibliotherapy in the field of education is simply the reading of books which aid in the modification of children's attitudes and behavior. Medically, bibliotherapy involves reading materials and treatment planned and conducted under the guidance of a physician or other trained medical professional. It is used for medical and emotional problems. Webster's third Dictionary defines bibliotherapy as the "use of selected reading materials as therapeutic adjuvants in medicine and psychiatry". Also it is "guidance in the solution of personal problems through directed reading". Professionals in the field stress the control of bibliotherapy by skilled, trained librarians working with a team of physicians, social workers, occupational therapists and others.

How has the field of bibliotherapy developed?

The concept of bibliotherapy is not a new one. Aristotle believed that literature had healing effects. The ancient library at Thebes bore the inscription "The Healing Place of the Soul." In Alexandria, Egypt the library displayed the words, "Medicine for the Mind". Engraved on the Abby Library of St. Gall in Switzerland was the inscription "Medicine Chest for the Soul." The Romans also recognized there was some relationship between medicine and reading. It was often suggested that the works of great orators be read by patients so that their judgment might be improved. In 1272, a hospital in Cairo prescribed readings in the Koran as part of their treatment.

Most of the better mental hospitals of Europe had established libraries by the 18th century - in America by the middle of the 19th century. Pinal in France and Chiarugu in Italy included reading as an important part of the recreational program for the insane. Tuke at York Retreat in England recommended the reading of mathematics and the natural sciences for his patients.

By the early 19th century many physicians recommended books for the emotional difficulties of the mentally ill. Medical staffs often viewed the library as a pharmacy for the mind. Several American asylums- Hartford Retreat, McLean Hospital and the Friends' Asylum also chose for their patients books which were based on medical considerations, patient's background, and mental condition. Dr. Benjamin Rush, an early American pioneer in bibliotherapy, recommended the reading of Bible stories for mental patients. In 1840, a library was established for the prisoners in Sing Sing Prison. During this period John Minson Galt II published

one of the first books on the use of library services as therapy. He set down rules which governed the management of libraries, book selection, and patients' reading. As a doctor he stressed that the books he chose for patients were always based on sound medical views. Dr. Brown at Crichton Asylum in Scotland saw to it that his medical personnel brought a book catalogue to their patients on their daily visits. McLean Hospital was one of the first private mental hospitals to have an organized library under a trained librarian - E. Kathleen Jones. Jones stated that the library was of great value as a therapeutic agent. Around the same time the first general hospital established a library to be used as therapy for its patients. Alice Tyler was instrumental in establishing library services to state institutions. She persuaded the Iowa library committee to provide materials and a supervisor for state institutions.

One of the first persons to use the term "bibliotherapy" was Samuel McChord Crothers. In 1916, Crothers wrote an article describing Bagster's "Bibliopathic Institute", and he quoted Bagster as saying that bibliotherapy, being such a new science, was susceptible to many erroneous opinions.

Due to World War I, there were improved library services to the armed forces and the Veterans hospitals. Congress appropriated funds for the care of disabled soldiers, and the U. S. Veterans Bureau provided library services for them. Concurrently, Elizabeth Green, a librarian, and Dr. Sidney Schwab, a neurologist, wrote an article "The Therapeutic Use of a Hospital Library" in which they discussed

the library's obligation to its readers and provided concepts of bibliotherapy which are still in use today. Also, Elizabeth Pomeroy, noted librarian, studied the reading interests of 1,538 patients in 62 Veterans Administration facilities. Sadie P. Delaney, an internationally famous bibliotherapist, was a librarian at the Veterans Administration Hospital in Tuskegee, Alabama. Her work with delinquent boys and girls, the blind, and the foreign born, earned her world renown; her work at the Veterans Hospital was used as a model by many other Veterans Administration hospital librarians.

Important people such as Drs. Wm. and Karl Menninger furthered the use of bibliotherapy by encouraging the growth of the library at the Menninger Clinic. In 1930 they discussed a five year program in bibliotherapy. Karl Menninger's book, The Human Mind, was said by many to have a therapeutic effect; his "Guide to Psychiatric Books" was of great help to librarians. Many people believe that research in bibliotherapy started with the Menninger Studies. In 1937 W. Menninger read a paper on bibliotherapy before the American Psychological Association in Pittsburgh.

In the 1930's R. H. Schaufler's, The Poetry Cure, was dedicated to all "creative librarians" whom he thought of as superior bibliotherapists. Along the same lines Annie L. Craigie wrote the "Cheering Stimulus of Poetry in Veterans Bureau Hospitals." Dr. Gerald B. Webb wrote "The Prescription of Literature." Dr. G. O. Ireland and Sir Bruce-Porter called for the keeping of better case histories and records. Elizabeth R. Creglow authored "Therapeutic Value of Properly Selected Reading Matter." This article was written for both patients and librarians.

From the 30's through the 40's Dr. Gordon Kaman, a psychiatrist at the University of Minnesota, actively championed bibliotherapy. He stressed the importance of reading and the cooperation of physicians and librarians. He thought that bibliotherapy had a very bright future. Perrie Jones stressed the need for sufficient training of staff and better methodology. Congress passed the first legislation which brought Braille books for the blind and finally the "talking book."

World War II stimulated a revitalization of library services to the armed forces and Veterans Administration Hospitals. Once again there was a plea by Dr. Solomon Gagnon, chief executive officer at Boston Psychopathic Hospital, for the keeping of better reading records by librarians and physicians. At this time bibliotherapy branched out into educational and psychosocial areas. Evaline P. Jackson studied the effects of reading upon attitudes toward Negroes.

In the field of education, teachers began to utilize bibliotherapy in the 1940's. Today, the school media specialist, counselor, librarian, or teacher may incorporate bibliotherapy into their programs.

Bibliotherapy is compatible with certain educational goals in a developmental or preventive rather than remedial sense: education for psychological maturity, life adjustment, and character development. Zacharia and Moses state that not a single study in a substantial body of research found bibliotherapy to be ineffective in a school situation.

Some of the school situations in which bibliotherapy may be found useful are: membership in a library club or group; discussion groups utilizing fiction and biography to demonstrate how one might overcome a personal habit or deficiency, i.e., stuttering; reading about various racial or ethnic groups to help understand problems of prejudice and hostility.

Bibliotherapy in the school context may be used in conjunction with educational and career planning, familial relations, teacher-pupil cooperation, and with remedial measures in association with outside agencies, i.e., police, courts, welfare systems, employment personnel, medical staff and/or community organizations.

In 1963, the New York City Board of Education established eleven reading clinics to employ bibliotherapy vis-a-vis the remedial reader.

In the 1940's, Eleanor Mascarino, librarian, and Dr. Delmar Good, physician, attempted to use bibliotherapy and shock treatment. Ilse Bry wrote "Medical Aspects of Literature: A Bibliographical Outline." In 1946, Dr. Jerome Schneck researched a bibliotherapy project at the Menninger Clinic on neuropsychiatric patients. Dr. Edward B. Allen, psychiatrist, stressed close cooperation with a bibliotherapeutic team. Dr. Melba H. Duncan wrote of the "Clinical Use of Fiction and Biography Featuring Stuttering". A Veterans Administration report recommended that a controlled study be undertaken in the therapeutic use of books. In 1948, Dr. Louis Gottschalk discussed the use of bibliotherapy as an adjunct to psychotherapy. In 1949, Caroline Shrodes authored a doctoral dissertation, a landmark publication, a theoretical and clinical study which demonstrated the use of bibliotherapy as a treatment method in psychotherapy. At the same time two masters papers in bibliotherapy appeared by Isabelle H. Rust and Elizabeth A. Stein that examined bibliotherapy in mental hospitals and tuberculosis sanatoria. In 1951, another Ph.D. dissertation appeared by Esther A. Hartman, "Imaginative Literature as a Projective Technique: A Study of Bibliotherapy."

During the 1950's group reading was added to the treatment of alcoholism. Dr. Lore Hirsch wrote the importance of discussion between patient and doctor. In 1952, an experiment in group reading and psychotherapy took place; Pavel, Stone, and Frank participated. John McFarland wrote an important paper which furthered the use of group bibliotherapy. Vera Flandorf authored an exceptional outline of bibliotherapy, "Getting Well With Books", as it applied to children. In 1954, Melvin C. Oathout wrote an excellent paper which became a classic in the field; he explored the aspects of bibliotherapy necessary for it to become a science. Chaney, Ingalls, and Hannigan reviewed group bibliotherapy programs, commented upon varieties of patients, and gave much needed practical advice. The Veterans Administration again published a planning letter requesting that more research projects be undertaken. The 1956 issue of Library Journal advertised for a bibliotherapist. There was discussion on the use of bibliotherapy as a preventative as well as a cure, and the duties of a bibliotherapy team were defined. In 1958, Ruth Tews wrote a chapter, "The Patients' Library"; she stressed the need for more research and the better training of bibliotherapists. Floch investigated the use of bibliotherapy with drug addicts in correctional institutions. By this time there was enough literature on bibliotherapy for Artemisia J. Junier to write a masters thesis, "Subjective Index to the Literature of Bibliotherapy 1900-1958". Circa 1959, a poetry therapy group of the Mental Hygiene Clinic of Cumberland Hospital in Brooklyn was established. Under the leadership of Eli Greifer the movement spread significantly.

In October, 1962, the journal Library Trends, devoted an entire issue to bibliotherapy with Ruth Tews as editor. Soon thereafter, a workshop on bibliotherapy was held in conjunction with the American Library Association's annual conference at St. Louis. Psychiatry,

clinical psychology, psychiatric nursing and social work were represented, as were 32 other related agencies. A bibliotherapy clearinghouse under Wm. E. Technor was established by the Association of Hospital and Institutional Libraries, and the Library Service and Construction Act Title IVA was passed by congress which helped to improve services at the state institution. Ititle IVB improved services to the physically handicapped.

In the 1960's, the public library of Cincinnati received a federal grant for a two year demonstration with exceptional children and bibliotherapy. Under Hilda Limper, a film, Reaching Out: The Library and the Exceptional Child was produced. The Medicine and General Reference Library of Veterans Administration published an annotated bibliography, "We Call it Bibliotherapy"; it covered the years 1900-1966. Vera Flandorf compiled a list of books which would help children during their stay in the hospital. Val Clear, Chairman of the Department of Sociology and Social Work at Anderson College, discussed his use of fiction and biography to develop attitudes. Austin Porterfield presented a psychological and sociological point of view in Mirror for Adjustment which involved seeing oneself in books.

Work in bibliotherapy progressed through the 1960's in such areas as drug addiction, fear, attitudinal changes, moral maturity, death and all exceptionalities. It also advanced in both educational and psychological areas. Zaccaria and Moses explained their educational point of view in Facilitating Human Development Through Reading: The Use of Bibliotherapy in Teaching and Counseling.

In 1969, Dr. J. Leedy traced the development of poetry therapy and set forth a curriculum for training such therapists; in 1973, he wrote Poetry the Healer. In 1971, Bibliotherapy Methods and Materials was

produced by a committee of the Association of Hospital and Institutional Libraries of ALA chaired by Mildred T. Moody. A subcommittee chaired by Hilda Limper studied the troubled child.

In the 70's, Rev. Louis Rongione of Villanova taught one of the first classes on the theory of bibliotherapy. Eleanor Brown wrote on the widening application of bibliotherapy. In 1977, S. S. Dreyer completed a masters thesis published in book form, The Bookfinder: A Guide to Children's Literature About the Needs and Problems of Youth Aged 2-15. Bernstein wrote a book on coping with loss and separation. In 1978, Rhea Rubin published two excellent books, a sourcebook and the theory and practice of bibliotherapy.

As William K. Beatty stated in "A Historical Review of Bibliotherapy", "If the bibliotherapist of the future will practice the profession of librarianship, make careful and detailed studies of their readers and make use of their imagination and sense of humor, bibliotherapy will prosper to the advantage of all concerned." Bibliotherapy, You've come a long way!

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